(vii)	Seshachalam	Andhra Pradesh
(viii)	Chintapalli	Andhra Pradesh
(ix)	Lakshadweep Islands	Lakshadweep

Toxicity Tests at Alag Shipyard

1141. SHRI K.M. SAIFULLAH: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) the findings of the expert team appointed to carry out toxicity tests on the two American ships which had arrived for "Breaking" at the Alag Shipyard and were reported to be carrying toxic material;

(b) whether the work of demolition of these ships has since been resumed; and

(c) the losses suffered by the two ship-breaking parties as a result of the stoppage of breaking operations on the orders of the Ministry?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (PROF. SAIFUDDIN SOZ): (a) To assess the pollution potential of ship-breaking, a team of officials of the Central Pollution Control Board visited the Alang ship-breaking yard, Gujarat, on 26.7.97. Sea water samples tested were found to have high Oil and Grease contents (exceeding discharge limit of coastal area of 20 milligram/litre). The test results of the samples collected by the investigating team on 8.8.97 around the two US ships namely, the OVERSEAS VALDEZ and T.T. KITTANING indicated higher values of Chemical Oxygen Demand (COD) and Oil and Greas.

(b) and (c) Yes, Sir. The work of demolition of OVERSEAS VALDEZ and T.T. KITTANING were resumed on 22.8.97 after withdrawal of the order to maintain status-quo issued on 5.8.97. As per information made available by the Gujarat Maritime Board, total losses due to stoppage of ship-being operations was estimated as Rs.35.20 lakhs.

Revision of National Forest Policy

1142. DR. MANMOHAN SINGH: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal to revise the National Forest Policy; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (PROF. SAIFUDDIN SOZ): (a) and (b) Government have constituted a Committee on 21.10.97 to review the implementation of the National Forest Policy, 1988 and to suggest any change in the policy, if required.

Forest cover in the country

1143. SHRI E. BALANANDAN:
SHRIMATI CHANDRAKALA PANDEY:

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) what is the minimum forest cover needed in India as far as environment and forest are concerned;

(b) the present position of State-wise land with forest cover;

(c) whether the existing laws in the country are enough to halt the process of denuding the forests;

(d) if so, the relevent sections of the existing laws; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefore?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS: (PROF. SAIFUDDIN SOZ): (a) The National Forest Policy, 1988 sets to have a minimum of one-third of the total land area of the country under forest or tree cover to ensure environmental stability and maintenance of ecological balance including atmospheric equilibrium.

(b) A statement depicting extent of the land with forest cover is appended as statement (*See* below)